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Employment Equity

A response to
The Abella Commission of Inquiry
on Equality in Employment

General summary





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INEQUALITY REMAINS

- * In 1982, average male earnings were \$25,096 compared to average female earnings of \$16,056.
- * 77% of women in the labour force are in only five of the 22 major job categories – sales, clerical, services, health and teaching.
- * In 1982, a woman with a university degree earned the same as a man with a high school education.
- * Whites have three job prospects for every one for Blacks. (“Who Gets the Work”, January 1985)
- * Among employable disabled persons, 50% are unemployed.
- * In many Native communities, unemployment is higher than 70%.

EMPLOYMENT EQUITY

Employment Equity is a concept which:

- * removes employment barriers;
- * identifies and removes discriminatory policies and practices;
- * seeks the goal of fair representation for all Canadians, in particular, women, Native people, disabled persons and visible minorities;
- * promotes economic development through the full utilization of the talents of all Canadians.

Employment Equity:

- * does not impose quotas;
- * seeks results;
- * avoids complicated bureaucratic mechanisms;
- * provides for plans to achieve Employment Equity in hiring practices, training, promotions and levels of pay;
- * benefits those companies with good human resource planning policies by providing a more productive and competent work force.

GOVERNMENT ACTIONS

1. Extend Employment Equity to Crown Corporations

- * Crown Corporations to develop plans to achieve Employment Equity.
- * Individual plans to reflect corporations' needs.
- * Annual reporting on results to Parliament through the Minister responsible within one year.
- * No legislation required.
- * Applies to all Crown Corporations. Approximately 200,000 employees.

Costs: \$7.4 million annually (available within existing Corporate resources)

2. Extend Employment Equity to Federally-Regulated Business

- * Companies to develop plans to achieve Employment Equity.
- * Individual plans to reflect business' needs.
- * Annual reports on results to Parliament.
- * Adjustment period for companies to prepare systems.
- * Reporting commences in three years.
- * Excludes companies with fewer than 100 employees.
- * Applies to 800 companies out of 4,500. Approximately 450,000 employees.

Costs: \$15 million annually

GOVERNMENT ACTIONS (Cont'd)

3. Extend Employment Equity to government purchasing

- * Government contractors to commit to Employment Equity.
- * Applies to contracts over \$200,000 for goods and services.
- * Those not meeting their commitments will be refused future contracts.
- * Appeal procedures if refused future contracts.
- * Applies to approximately 100 companies totaling 300,000 employees.

Costs: \$8 million annually.

4. Enforcement

- * Crown corporations required to report annually to Parliament.
- * Federally-regulated business required by legislation to report annually to Parliament.
- * All data reported annually to Parliament open to public scrutiny and comparison.
- * The Canadian Human Rights Commission will continue to initiate investigations and respond to complaints.
- * Progress of government contractors in implementing Employment Equity will be monitored.
- * Contractors failing to meet their commitments will not be considered for future contracts until their performance improves.

GOVERNMENT ACTIONS (Cont'd)

5. Training

- * Design and monitoring of new training and employment programs to ensure fair access for all target groups.
- * Job re-entry of women, a major priority in new labour market strategy.
- * Increased dependant care allowance to \$75 for each child.
- * Innovative pilot projects to remove employment barriers (e.g. flexible work time and childcare arrangements).

6. Government as Employer

- * Intensified implementation of the Affirmative Action program with a commitment for adequate resources to ensure that goals are met promptly.
- * Immediate initiatives to identify systematic barriers to Employment Equity in the public service classification system.
- * Commitment to implement equal pay for work of equal value in the public service.
- * To achieve the stated goal, invitation extended to public service unions to participate in a senior level joint union/management committee to prepare a detailed implementation plan in the area of equal pay for work of equal value throughout the public service. A preliminary report from this committee will be expected by June 30, 1985.

TIMETABLE

March 8, 1985

Announcement

March-May 1985

Consultations with representatives of business, labour, women's groups, Native people, visible minorities and disabled persons

June 1985

Legislation introduced

Fall, 1985

Employment Equity extended to government purchasing

September 1985

Implementation by Crown corporations

1986

Reporting by Crown corporations

1988

Reporting begins for federally-regulated businesses

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTIONS ON ABELLA RECOMMENDATIONS

| Recommendations | Subject | Responses |
|-----------------|----------------------|---|
| 1-37 | Employment Equity | Government to implement Employment Equity. |
| 38-52 | Education | Provincial matter. |
| 53-90 | Training | Key elements of the recommendations to be addressed in the labour market strategy announced February 14, 1985. |
| 91-102 | Child Care | Will be addressed by the Parliamentary Task Force on Child Care. |
| 103-117 | Miscellaneous issues | <p>To be addressed by responsible Departments – e.g.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Treatment of child care providers;– Credit availability;– Technical aids for disabled persons. |

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT ACTIONS ON ABELLA RECOMMENDATIONS

| Response | Subject | Comments |
|--|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| Government to implement Employment Equity. | Employment Equity | Employment Equity Act, 1986 |
| Provincial matter | Education | Education Act, 1981 |
| Key elements of the recommendations to be addressed in the labour market strategy announced February 14, 1982. | Training | Training Act, 1981 |
| Will be addressed by the Parliamentary Task Force on Child Care. | Child Care | Child Care Act, 1981 |
| To be addressed by responsible Departments - e.g. | Miscellaneous | Miscellaneous |
| - Treatment of child care providers | | |
| - Credit availability | | |
| - Technical aids for disabled persons | | |

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